RICHEST HEART OF ALL!

a Tenko Chabashira x Himiko Yumeno fanzine

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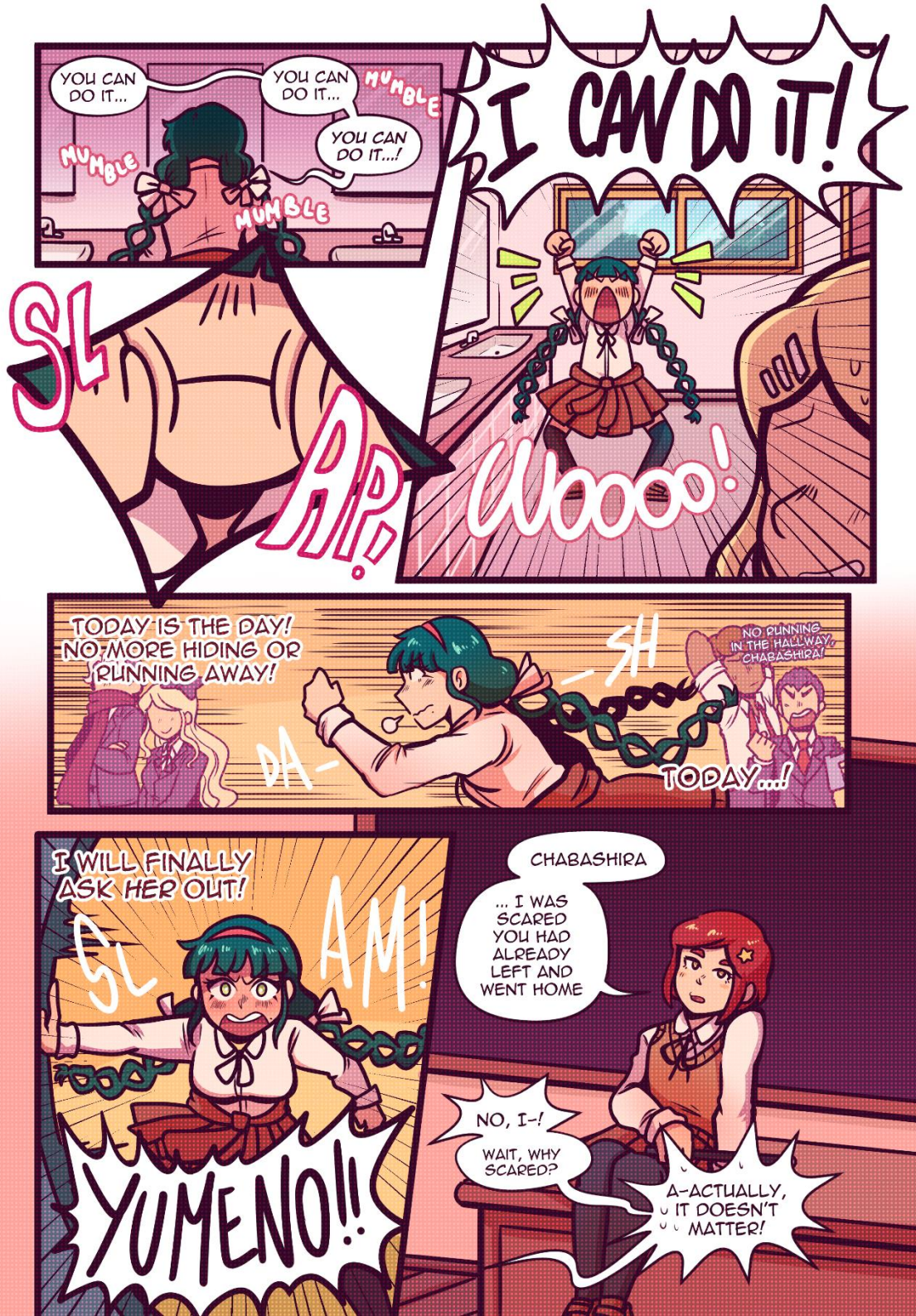
"Richest Heart Of All!" is a free digital fanzine focused on the romantic relationship between Tenko Chabashira and Himiko Yumeno from Danganronpa V3 Killing Harmony.

This zine features 16 page artists, 4 digital merch artists and 4 writers! That said, it wouldn't be possible without your support, so the mod team thanks you, the viewer, for appreciating this idea and TenMiko!


YOU CAN DO IT...
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TODAY IS THE DAY! NO MORE HIDING OR RUNNING AWAY!
DA-
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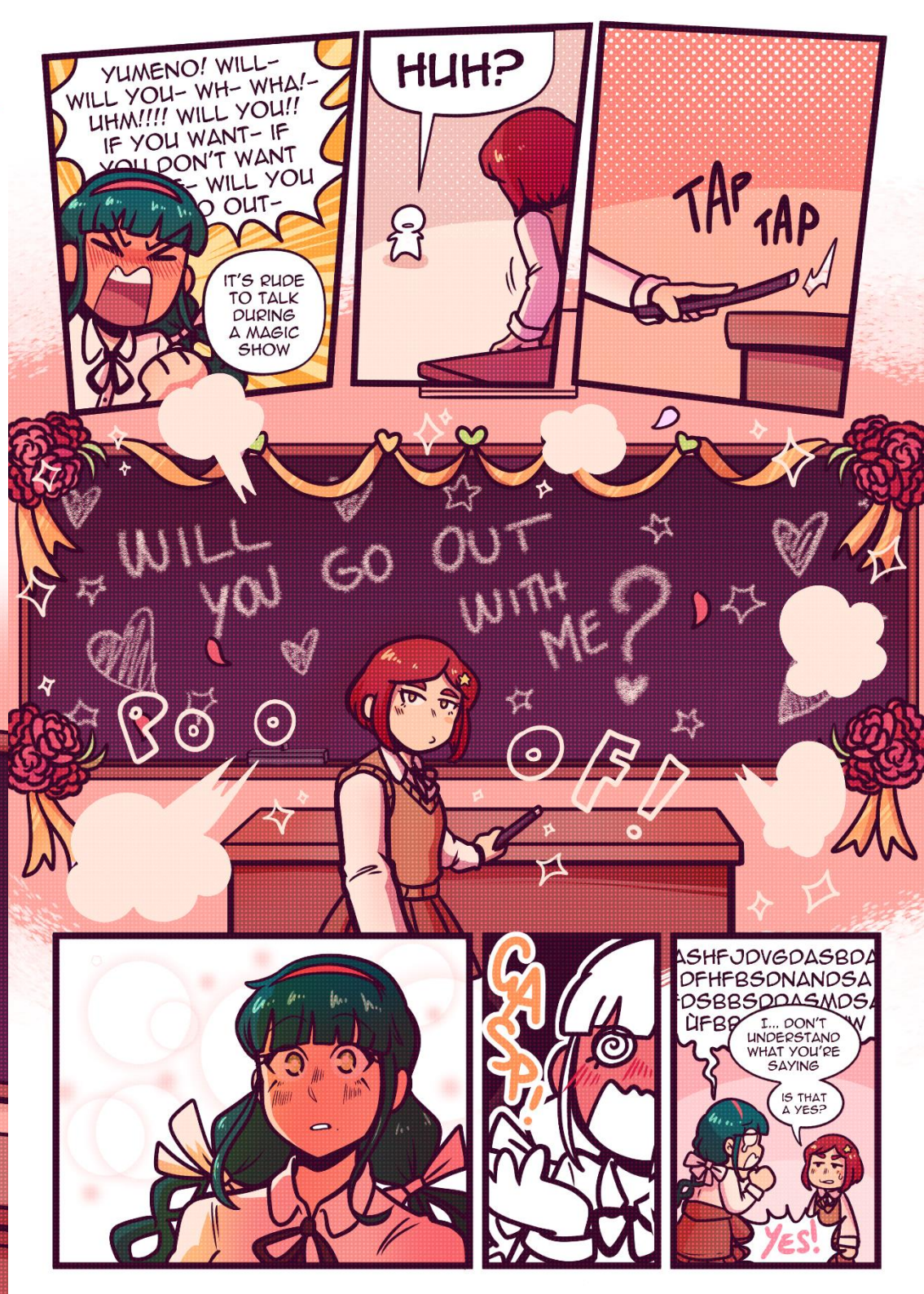
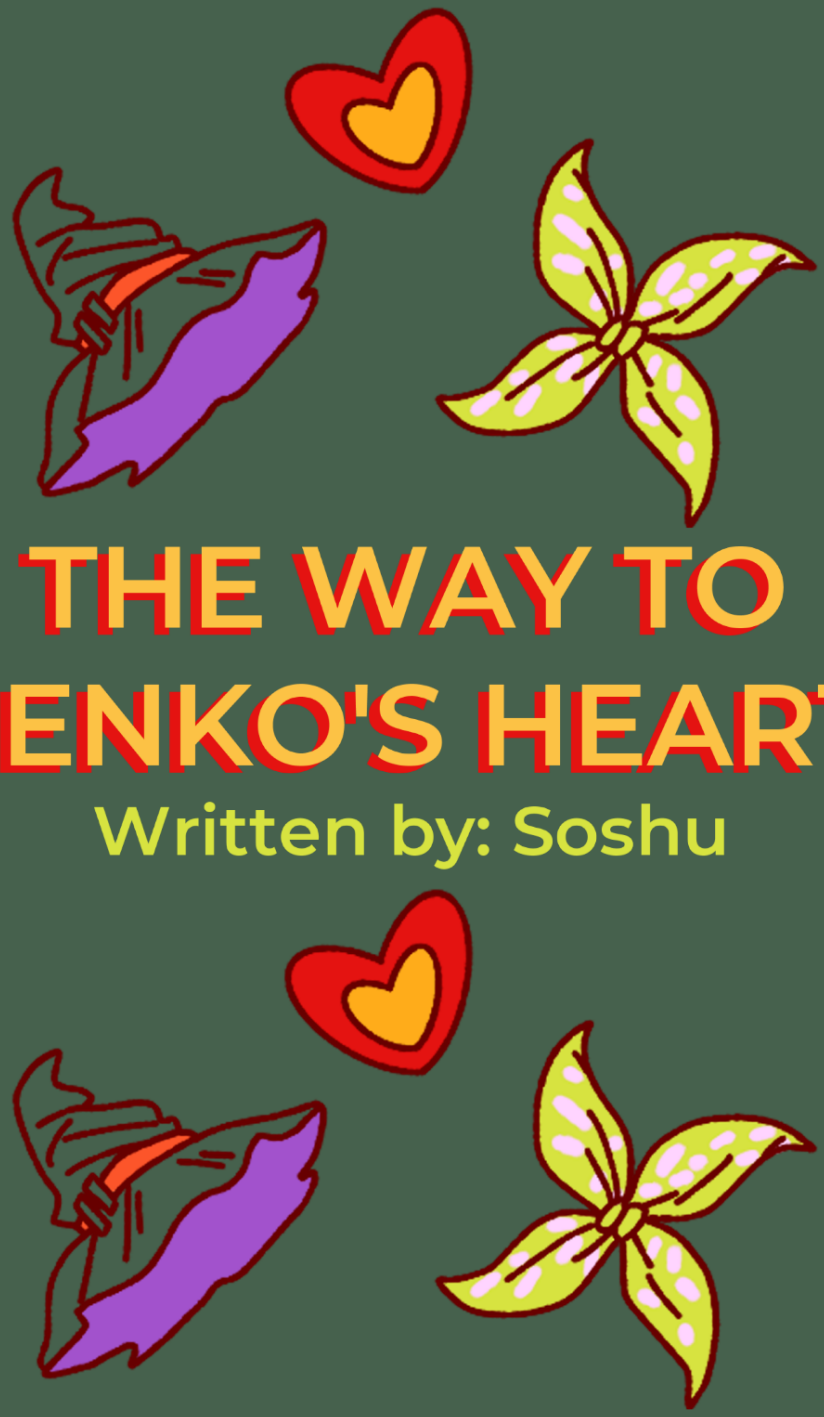
NO RUNNING IN THE HALLWAY, CHABASHIRA!
TODAY...!
I WILL FINALLY ASK HER OUT!
SL
AM!
YUMENO!!
CHABASHIRA
... I WAS SCARED YOU HAD ALREADY LEFT AND WENT HOME
NO, I-!
WAIT, WHY SCARED?
A-ACTUALLY, IT DOESN'T MATTER!


YUMENO! WILL- WILL YOU- WH- WHA!- UHM!!!! WILL YOU!! IF YOU WANT- IF YOU DON'T WANT - WILL YOU O OUT-
IT'S RUDE TO TALK DURING A MAGIC SHOW
HUH?
TAP TAP
WILL YOU GO OUT WITH ME?
POOF!!
GASP!
ASHFJDVGDASBDA DFHFBSDNANDSA
I... DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING
IS THAT A YES?
YES!

TENMIKO
KØRKAINE
RICHEST HEART OF ALL!



THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

Written by: Soshu

Waves of long grass form an endless sea around Tenko, fluttering gently in the wind as she walks down the trail. She stops from time to time to glance over her shoulder, back at the long and winding trek that led her here through the rolling golden hills. She continues the hike, gravel crunching underfoot, sun beating down on her from above, until she arrives at her destination: a wide-open clearing of green-and-yellow grass, the old oak tree in its center a sheltered spot of shade. Wiping the sweat from her brow, Tenko stops to look around and smell the fresh outside air, gripping a picnic basket tight in one hand. This is the place.

"This is it," comes a little voice from beside her. Stepping into the clearing, Himiko thumps her mage's staff on the ground, casting a hand over the scene before them. "This is where our training's gonna start. I can feel it."

Just the sound of Himiko's voice is enough to raise Tenko's spirits. "I know, right? You can feel it too, Himiko?" She takes a deep breath and lets out a dreamy sigh. "This is the *perfect* spot for Neo-Aikido training! Because this place, I can tell, is in *perfect* harmony with nat-"

"Because it sits on a ley line." Himiko proudly puffs out her chest with a self-assured smirk. "And that means it's full of mana!"

Tenko cocks her head to one side, processing . "...Yes! Exactly what I was going to say!" She quickly changes her tune, gushing over Himiko with a squeal. "Himiko, you're so *smart*!" The moment passing, she snaps into a fighting stance. "Now come on! We've gotta make the best of this perfect training environment! Today's the day we'll finally get it... our *magic-enhanced Neo-Aikido*!"

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

She thrusts a palm in front of her, dealing an imaginary foe a mortal blow. "Altogether now! Lemme hear your war cry, Himiko!" She launches a fiery roundhouse kick. "*HIIIIIIYAH!*"

Himiko half-heartedly waves her staff. "N-... *nyeh*!"

They throw themselves into training with reckless abandon, honing their strongest techniques in martial arts and magic. Tenko doggedly does her stretches; Himiko settles for voice exercises. Tenko throws her fiercest punches; Himiko pulls coins from behind her ears. Tenko readies her stance and prepares to practice her throws - but one look at Himiko's defenseless, adorable face, and she decides that it can wait for another day.

One hundred roundhouse kicks and poses for fans later, their energy is at last depleted.

Tenko flops face-down onto the picnic blanket, groaning loudly. "I'm beat," she whines, lazily kicking her feet. "I don't wanna walk anywhere for at least a week... Can we eat now?"

"Giving up already?" Himiko asks, idly shuffling through a deck of cards. "C'mon, Tenko, you gotta show more dedication to your craft. Like me."

“Huh?” Tenko raises her head and squints in confusion. "No! I'm not tired! I could easily go for another hundred reps!" Eyes ablaze with righteous fury, she leaps to her feet and raises her hands, ready for battle. "Just you watch! I'll train harder and make you proud, Himiko! Just watch me! *HIIIYA-*”

Her mighty war cry is drowned out by the impatient rumbling sound. Tenko reddens and hugs her arms around her waist. "...Or we could eat now, I guess..."

"Nyeh... I was getting hungry anyway..." Himiko lazily casts aside the cards. "And now it's time for the main event. I need a volunteer for this next act-"

"Oh! Me, me! I volunteer! Is it me!?" Tenko bounces up and down, one hand raised in the iar. "*Pickmepickmepickme!*"

"Hm..." Himiko scratches her chin, closely scrutinizing her audience of one. "You there, in blue. Bring me the basket."

"*Yes*! Haha! I win!" Tenko leaps into the air and pumps a fist. “Take that, *males*!” She reaches for the basket and hungrily licks her lips. "I can't wait to see what you made, Himiko! Let's eat-"

"Wait." Himiko cuts her off, placing her hand atop the other girl's. "I can't let you do that yet."

"Eep!" Tenko jumps at the sudden contact. "H-... Himiko...?"

Himiko's eyes meet hers in a grave and serious gaze. "Tenko," she begins solemnly, "We're here on a journey to hone our magical power. Everything we do is a top secret magical secret, and the food here is no different." She takes a deep breath and raises her index finger. "You can't let this stuff fall into the wrong hands. Now repeat after me: *I swear on my master's name that this forbidden knowledge shall stay secret.*"

Tenko gulps and a bead of sweat trickles down her forehead. Slowly, numbly, she manages to make herself nod. "O-... okay..."

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

Himiko sighs. "Close enough." She wraps her fingers around Tenko's and gives her a firm handshake. "There! With this, the contract is sealed. Normally I'd make a blood pact to protect it, but I'm way too scared of blood." She shudders. "Gross. Anyway, behold. The oldest, most closely guarded secret from the *Gourmet Grimoire*... also known to mere mortals as *Chef Hanamura's Cookbook*. Here it is... the Ultimate Picnic." She releases Tenko's hand and pushes the basket closer. "Prepare to be amazed."

Tenko tries to peer inside, quivering with excitement. "Wh-what's in it...?"

Himiko *nyeh*s quietly. "Well, the recipe called for, like, sandwiches and salads and stuff. For a balanced diet. But making those sounded like a pain, so I just skipped straight to dessert." She gives the picnic basket a gentle, affectionate pat. "Behold! The very finest in Japanese sweets. Made lovingly-" she coughs, "-I mean, *carefully* by the hand of the Ultimate Mage."

"Whoa, really...?" Tenko's heart flutters with excitement. "You made them all yourself?"
"Yeah, 'course I did." The little mage smiles. "You know, baking's a lot like magic."
Tenko blinks. "Really? How so?"

"'Cuz most people don't know how to do either." Himiko gestures eagerly to the picnic basket. "Go on and get some. I promise the basket's not a mimic."

Tenko's heart skips a beat as her attention turns to the wicker basket. She inches closer, slowly scooting across the picnic blanket, and rests a hand on its lid.

What perfect, innocent little confection, as perfect and innocent as Himiko herself, waits inside? Pulse pounding in her ears, Tenko forces her eyes shut and reaches a hand inside, her fingers landing on something soft and squishy. Slowly, apprehensively, she withdraws her hand and opens her eyes, her gaze coming to rest on her two upturned palms.

The smallest, most perfect manju in the world stares right back at her.

"Oh..." Tenko's eyes water as she looks over the little bun. "It's so *tiny*..."

"Look closely," Himiko instructs. "Like they say, the daemon's in the details."

"O-okay!" Squinting and bringing the pastry to her face, Tenko spies two little dots for eyes and a tiny bump forming a beak, giving the bun the round, friendly shape of a little bird.* Just looking at it she can almost hear the sound of beautiful chirping, almost see it spread its little wings... to bring a pastry to life, of all things! This *must* be the might of the Ultimate Mage! So cute, so innocent, so pure, of course this was Himiko's handiwork! Who else could be capable of creating something so adorable? Tenko sighs dreamily and brings the manju closer to her face. She could just admire it forever, lost in the flawless majesty of Himiko's creation-

"*Ahem*." Himiko thumps her staff and Tenko jumps at the sudden noise. "Tenko, you're supposed to eat them, not just stare at them."

* - This is a real thing called Hiyoko Manju (yes, like Hiyoko Saionji) that's a specialty of Fukuoka. As it happens Tenko's favorite food, tripe hot pot (motsunabe), is also a Fukuoka thing.

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

Tenko whines. "B-but... to eat something so beautiful and delicate, it's... like destroying a work of art..." She remembers another reason to hesitate and her eyes go wide. "Oh, *shoot*! And, and Master always says I shouldn't eat sweet things, 'cause I might get super hyper from all the sugar!"

"That'd be terrible," mumbles Himiko, watching Tenko trembling violently.

"And- and- and things like this aren't good for you, they might make me sick or they might make me fat and my fighting spirit won't survive either!" Excuses and worries pour from her mouth in a mad, unstoppable ramble. "Geez, Himiko, I'm super sorry, but I dunno if I should- I mean, what if I get in trouble, and I'm not welcome at the temple anymore, and-"

The staff falls again. "*Tenko*."

Tenko jolts and a squeak escapes her throat. "Y-yes!?"

"It's okay. Don't worry about what your master says, you can eat what you like." Himiko leans forward and pokes Tenko in the forehead. "We're on a wilderness sabbatical, honing our forbidden art. That means that for you to truly master Magical Neo-Aikido, you gotta pay attention to the magic expert." She jabs a thumb into her own chest. "I'll watch over your training for as long as it takes. I'm the only master you have in this place, got it?"

Tenko's head cocks to one side in confusion. "You're... my master?" Her eyes fly wide open and she gasps in shock. "W-wait, are you saying you're gonna make me your *thrall*? Oh, shoot, does that mean I have to be a *wolf* or something?"**

** - This is basically the plot of Himiko's Hotel event.

Himiko squints. "Huh?"

"I-I mean, that's an awful lot to ask of lil' old me," Tenko babbles, nervously fidgeting with her fingers, "that is, I dunno if I'd be a great familiar for a powerful mage like you, and I don't know if I could even be a wolf in the first place! I'm not that good at doing tricks and stuff and *oh my gosh this is all so sudden and I-*"

"No. Not what I meant." Himiko lightly bonks the staff on Tenko's head and the other girl whines. "I meant, your master or your parents or whoever isn't here. I'm all there is. So if I say it's okay for you to eat a few sweets, then it's okay. Got it?"

Tenko opens her mouth to argue, but her resistance crumbles in the face of Himiko's determination. "O-... okay..."

"Good." Himiko nods encouragingly, mouth curling into a subtle hint at a smile. "Now go on. I made those just for you."

Tenko glances down at her palms again. "But..." Conflict brews in her mind as she stares into the *manju*. *Mind over strength*, the Master's voice warns. *Control your desires, lest they dull your fighting spirit*. But one look at Himiko's patiently waiting face, and the Master fades into oblivion.

"*Itadakimasu*," Tenko whispers, closing her eyes, lifting the little bird to her mouth, and taking the tiniest, most cautious little nibble.

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

A bomb of flavor detonates in her mouth. Words hardly come to Tenko's mind to describe it, layers of savory and sweet and tastes she can't even begin to describe spilling from Himiko's work of flawless culinary conjury. The sensation strikes her hard in her heart, brain, and stomach at once, leaving her still and shellshocked with eyes wide and mind blank, overcome with heavenly, flavorful bliss – a brief moment of ascension to sweet, sugary nirvana.

Himiko smiles proudly. "Well? Whaddya think?"

"This... *this is amazing*!" Tenko squeals with delight, eyes shimmering as she devours the rest of the bun. Appetite building, she greedily fumbles inside the picnic basket for another treat, this time finding a pink-colored ball of mochi. She barely takes the time to admire it before she crams it into her mouth. "Sho good," she mewls, muffled by a mouthful of rice cake.

"Tasty, huh? The flavor's been enhanced by my magic!" Himiko's smile grows into a smug smirk. "And also by powdered sugar."

"You kidding!? They're *delicious*!" All pretenses of restraint long gone, Tenko shoves her hand into the basket and grabs more snacks, all but inhaling each one in a single bite. "Himiko, you're the *best*-" she devours a taiyaki, "*mage*-" a dango meets its end, "***ever***!" The rest of her words are drowned out by the carnage, leaving only the sounds of ravenous yet satisfied squealing.

Himiko rests her head in her hands, watching the massacre with a mixture of awe and pride. A soft little giggle rises up from her throat. "You like 'em, huh?"

"They're wonderful! They're the best! They're.... *they're*..." Tenko's hand scrambles to grab another cake, clawing blindly at the inside of the basket but ends up groping at empty space instead. "All gone..." Her eyes cloud over with sadness. Even her hair bow seems to droop.

Himiko frowns. "Huh? Already?" She peers into the emptied picnic basket and sighs. "Nyeh. Had to happen sooner or later. Even I don't have the XP for the Everything-You-Eat-Is-All-You-Can-Eat Spell."

"It was so good, but it was gone so fast..." Tenko sniffles, dabbing at her teary eyes with a napkin. "Th-... thank you, Himiko... it was truly a blessing to get to eat your baking! I swear, I'll remember this moment for the rest of my life-"

"Wait a minute. I never said that was the last of 'em." Himiko reaches over and pats a reassuring hand on her shoulder. "After all, it's just food. It might be a lotta work, but I could always make more."

Tenko's eyes light up again and she gasps in stunned surprise. "You would!?"

"Yeah, of course. I'd burn through a lotta MP, but it'd be totally worth it just to see you smile like that again." An idea occurs to her and she stares into the ground, nervously twiddling her thumbs. "Y'know, if you want, once I have enough mana... I could even make 'em for you every day."

Tenko goes conspicuously silent. Himiko raises her head, finding the other girl utterly paralyzed, mouth slightly open in dumbfounded silence. The mage frowns. "Um... Tenko?"

Tenko sniffles loudly, eyes welling up with fresh tears. "H-... Himiko..."

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

Himiko blinks. "Nyeh? Did I say something weird?" She thinks over her previous words, tapping a finger to her chin. The promise of making more sweets... something about it sounds uncannily familiar. *If you want, I could make them for you every day.* Where has she heard that before, again? Something about... *make miso soup for me every morning?****

Realization dawns, and her face turns the color of her hair. Oh.

"*Himikooooooo*!" Tenko bawls loudly and pounces, flinging her arms around the other girl's shoulders and sending them both toppling to the ground.

"*Nyeeeeeh*!" Himiko whines, face scrunching up with embarrassment. "Tenkoooo! What are you-"

"I'd love that so much," sobs Tenko, burying her face in Himiko's shoulder, tears streaming down her cheeks. "I accept... of course I accept! I want my cute, tiny, adorable little Himiko to cook for me every day! I wanna be with you every day and hold you every night!"

"T-Tenko, that's not what I-"

"I'll stay by your side forever and never let you go!" Tenko wails, overcome with emotion. "I wanna be with you for the rest of my life! And- and- and I promise! I'll do everything in my power to protect you from anyone who'd hurt my tiny little flower! Whether it's evil warlocks, or witch hunters, or... or *men*!" She squeezes the mage tighter and nuzzles furiously. "It's a warrior's... p-promise!"

Himiko whines loudly and continues to flail. But as she opens her mouth to protest, an idea hits her and she falters.

*** - Supposedly a traditional Japanese marriage proposal

Was it *really* a mistake?

Her mind goes to the day before the picnic and her hours of laboring over her sweets, full of toil and tedium that someone as lazy as her should have hated. Had she truly done that for just an ordinary friend? And besides, every tale from her master of the world of magic and fantasy had its knight in shining armor, the fiercely loyal warrior shielding the party from harm. What if her hero was by her side all along, loud and lovable and full of energy, her head topped not with a helmet or crest but an adorable pinwheel bow?

Her decision made, Himiko closes her eyes and returns the other girl's hug. "...Yeah. It's a promise."

Tenko's crying abruptly stops as her eyes widen with a gasp. "R-... really? Y-you mean it?"

"Of course I mean it," blurts out Himiko before she has time to hesitate. "There's a lotta things out there that could be dangerous to a mage. That's why I'll need a loyal protector." Feeling her blush burn her cheeks she shields her face from view, burying it in Tenko's neck. "And... there's no one I'd rather have it be than you. I promise, Tenko...."

Tenko blinks, still in apparent disbelief. She sniffs softly and her eyes well up again, a soft wail rising from her throat as the magician's words set in. "Waaaaah... I'm so happyyyyy...." Her face scrunches up and she sniffles especially loudly.

Himiko sighs and squeezes the other girl again. "There's no helping you... guess it's come to this. Time to use my ultimate skill... the Ultimate Stop-Crying Spell." Her little hand brushes aside Tenko's locks, and Himiko forces her eyes shut and plants a single kiss on her cheek.

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

Tenko's crying stops immediately. Himiko pets her once, twice, three times on the head. "There. Can you calm down now?"

Tenko sniffles one last time, still frozen in disbelief. "I'll... try..."

"Good." Himiko hugs her once more. "You gotta train your heart to be stronger as well as your body, right? That's the Neo-Aikido way. You'll have to be as strong as possible if you're gonna spend your life with a powerful mage like me."

“B-... but...” Tenko whimpers quietly and her bow seems to droop again. “Is it really okay for you to depend on someone like me?”

“Nyeh?” Himiko frowns and squints at her. “Why wouldn’t it be?”

“B-because... people always say I’m too loud or annoying or that I’m embarrassing to be around...” Tenko stops to sniffle, forcing her eyes shut as she suppresses another whine. “And my face scrunches up weird when I cry and I don’t know any magic and I just don’t wanna be too much for you and-”

Himiko sighs, deflecting the rest with another tight squeeze to the shoulders. “Okay, okay, I got it... look, I know I complain about stuff being a pain all the time, but... you’re not annoying. I came with you on this lil’ hike ‘cause I trusted you... I wouldn’t have shared my deepest magical secrets with ya if I didn’t.” She frowns and a hand lands on her chin. “But it *is* true that you don’t have any magical ability....”

Tenko flinches at the betrayal. “Oh... th-then, I’m really not-”

“But.” Himiko rebuffs Tenko’s gloom with a sudden pat to the head. “You’ve, um... got a big heart and a warrior’s spirit. That’s gotta count for something. You definitely have the trappings of a... paladin, I guess, even if not the magic for one.” Himiko scratches at her neck deep in thought, rapidly flipping through the pages of the complicated fantasies in her head. “Maybe with the right teacher, you too could become worthy of your post...”

Tenko’s eyes meet hers and she freezes, eyes lighting up with hope. “Wait... really...!?”

“That’s right!” Finding her footing, Himiko puffs up with pride. “It’s no easy feat to learn magic for someone with no magical affinity. It’s gonna take a whole lotta lessons to get you up to speed. Maybe even... a whole lifetime’s worth.” Her self-assured aura wavers and her heart skips as she says it aloud. A whole lifetime.... Returning to the task at hand, she clears her throat and reassumes her triumphant air. “Nyeh, well, something like that, anyway. So...? Will you do it, no matter the danger we face? Will you devote your life to our greatest quest yet?”

Tenko stares at her, beaming with wonder and quivering with excitement. “Okay... I... I promise!” She wipes her eyes with one hand and loudly blows her nose. “Aaahhhh... I’m sorry I’m such a crybaby...”

A relieved smile slowly appears on Himiko’s lips. “It’s fine. Really.” Releasing her from the hug, Himiko extends a hand towards the other girl. "Here, maybe this’ll help. Wanna hold my hand for a little?"

Tenko gasps loudly, forgetting her tears immediately and all but exploding with excitement. "Do I!?"

THE WAY TO TENKO'S HEART

"Of course it's okay, dummy." With a wide and warm-hearted smile Himiko pats the ground next to her and again offers Tenko her hand. "Now come on. All that excitement's tired me out...."

She barely even finishes speaking before Tenko nuzzles up beside her, clutching her little hand as if it were the most valuable thing in the world, chest rising and falling and lips curled in a blissful smile. With a resigned yet happy sigh and another gentle pat to the girl's head, Himiko's eyes turn skyward, taking in the sounds of rustling grasses and the wisps of clouds up above. But before long she succumbs to the comfort and warmth of their embrace and joins her companion in sleep, leaving the mage and her loyal, lifelong protector in perfect, peaceful sleep as the clouds pass overhead and the sun slowly arcs through the sky.

GINGER

Poof!

STARCROSSED

Written by: Zee

Crickets sang their nighttime song as Tenko climbed upstairs to the dorm's second floor. There was no one else out this late... just her and the chirping chorus. She wouldn't be alone long, though.

She'd followed this route to her girlfriend's dorm many, many times — Himiko always griped that climbing the stairs to get home was such a pain, but Tenko always pointed out that it was great exercise. That usually just made her gripe more.

Tenko would climb a thousand staircases if it meant she got to see the lovely redhead, though — only one was practically a bargain! And so, quickly finding the familiar door, Tenko knocked a couple times before letting herself in.

She'd partially expected to find Himiko asleep, hardly a rare occurrence. A small shake or a gentle kiss was usually enough to rouse her. Tonight, though, Tenko stepped inside to find the mage looking out the window, her head resting in her arms on the sill.

"Himiko!" Tenko chirped, always happy to see her... but now, slightly curious as well. "Is there something interesting going on outside?"

"Mmm... technically."

"Let me see!" Tenko shut the door and ran over, jumping into bed beside her and making it shake as she joined her by the window. Yet the only thing she noticed when she followed Himiko's gaze was a cloudless sky.
"Hey, there's nothing out here..."

"Nyeh... yeah, there is. Look." Himiko lazily tipped a finger up.
"Stars."

STARCROSSED

Tenko checked again. She'd never paid them any mind until her girlfriend mentioned them, but a vast field of dots definitely were lighting up the dark. Pretty... though that didn't explain why they'd enraptured Himiko. "What's so interesting about them?"

Himiko side-eyed her, as if disappointed she didn't already know the answer. "I'm trying to see if I can spot any constellations tonight."

Surprised, Tenko glanced right back. "I didn't know you were into Astrology."

"Astronomy," Himiko corrected offhandedly. "And why wouldn't I be? Drawing power from the cosmos makes my magic stronger." She tilted her head, returning her gaze to the sky. "Plus, they're kind of interesting. I studied them a bit."

"Oooooh..." So that was why the mage's spells were so amazing. A bit more intrigued now, Tenko joined her in her stargazing, leaning on the windowsill. "Have you found anything yet?"

"Yep... look over there. See that really shiny one up there? That one's Sirius."

"It is?!" Tenko gasped, before furrowing her brow. "...*Why* is it serious?"

Himiko couldn't help but giggle. "I guess it is kind of important... it's the brightest star in the sky. And once you find that, you know where Canis Major is."

"The Cane Mayor?"

"Nyeh... Canis, like canine." The mage waggled a finger in the air, slowly tracing out a pattern only she could see. "It kind of looks like a dog. It's supposed to be the tracking hound of an old hunter."

"Wait, you mean stars have backstories?!"

"Yeah. Lots of them." Himiko pointed in another direction, and Tenko squinted reeeeally hard trying to see what her girlfriend was seeing. "Virgo's over there, the second largest constellation. The Maiden. It's associated with a lot of goddesses... think of it like a giant woman in the sky."

It was like Himiko had just told her heaven itself was up above. Tenko suddenly leaned out the window, muuuuch more interested in the constellations. "Then that one's my favorite one!"

"I thought you'd like that one."

After a moment, the fighter reeled herself back in, looking stern. "Wait, second largest? First largest had better not be a degenerate!"

"It isn't. Here, let me show you Hydra..."

For the next hour or so, the lecture went on. Himiko pointed out various cosmic oddities and Tenko did her best to keep up, sometimes seeing what she meant, sometimes completely lost. But no matter what, she always believed her girlfriend was telling the truth. She clearly knew what she was talking about... and Tenko realized this was one of the rare moments where Himiko seemed somewhat invested.

Normally, that glimmer of life was reserved for their dates, her magic shows, the occasional wild event. But here, just watching the gleaming dots above, it was like the stars were reflected in her eyes with how much they twinkled with delight.

By the end of it, Tenko's mind was full of all kinds of new information. Would she remember all of it? Probably not. But if it made Himiko happy, she'd come watch the stars with her again and again until she'd memorized it all. She'd definitely view the night a different way from now on, knowing just how much majesty lingered above.

And yet, Himiko seemed a bit disappointed. The mage sighed, her eyes falling down to the ground outside her window. "There's one thing I'm disappointed we can't see, though. I just can't spot it tonight... Cassiopeia."

"What's that?"

A low tint filled Himiko's cheeks, the girl holding a hand to her heart. "Well... it's another female constellation." But she proooobably wouldn't tell Tenko it was about a queen that insulted the gods and tried to sacrifice her daughter to appease them. "Somewhere in it is the Heart Nebula... it even looks like one. A big monument to love, just hanging up in the sky. It's really pretty... like you."

Her comment hung in the air, and soon, Tenko was blushing too. "Even if it was here," Himiko continued, "you'd need a telescope to see it. But I still wanted to show you where it was. Nyeh..."

Little did she know, Tenko's heart threatened to thump out of her chest and ascend to the heavens to replace it.

"That's okay!" she claimed, suddenly twisting to take Himiko's hands in hers.

"N-Nyeh?!"

"I don't need to see it to know it's there! Just like what we have between us! In fact..." She squeezed Himiko's hands, bowing her head. "I believe in it so much, I'll make a promise on it to you right now! I'll care about you as long as it lasts. Millions and millions and years! Even longer than that!"

It was actually more like something between ten and a hundred thousand years, but Himiko got her point. "Isn't all this a bit over the top?" she asked, appreciating the sentiment, but caught off-guard by the sudden vow.
Then again,'over the top' described Tenko very well.

"Maybe... but I mean every word! And if it's a bit much, it's because you deserve everything I can give and more!"

Himiko couldn't help but smile. Excessive... but sweet. Yep. That was definitely Tenko to a tee. Yet after a moment, she just shook her head. "You don't need to do that."

"E-eh?! Why not?!"

"Because..." Slowly, she shifted her hands in Tenko's grasp so their fingers could entwine instead. "Like you said... you don't need to see it to know it's real. And I know our feelings for each other are real." She sighed contently, leaning in to rest her head against her girlfriend's chest. "Besides...
I already cast a spell that'd keep us together forever and ever."

STARCROSSED

“You did?” Somehow, that brought Tenko comfort. If her magic guaranteed it, that meant it was true! The taller girl rested her face against the other’s hair, savoring this sweet moment. “I’m glad you did.”

She waited for a response. Instead, she felt a rumble as a small snore slipped out of Himiko’s mouth. She’d fallen asleep against her already... well, she had been up pretty late stargazing by her standards.

Tenko chuckled, stroking her head. That was okay. It cut everything a bit short, but she’d gotten the time with Himiko she’d wanted. It wasn’t the first time she’d fallen asleep on Tenko, and it probably wouldn’t be the last.

Knowing full well what to do by now, Tenko slowly eased her down and threw her blanket over them, cuddling into her side. She still had energy to spare – she knew by now that she’d always be awake longer than her girlfriend. But she’d rather hold her than go off and do her own thing. Time spent with Himiko was always better spent than doing anything else.

It took awhile, but eventually, Tenko joined her in the dream world. The last thought that flitted through her head before sleep claimed her was to remember to get Himiko a telescope for her birthday. Then their future stargazing dates would be all the more satisfying... and maybe, just maybe, they could see that Heart Nebula.

Together, the girls dozed, the window still open, the stars twinkling up above them.

WOW
loooo
loooo

BLINDED...

Written by: hottest_wheels

Tenko was used to feeling blinded by the light in Himiko's presence. She was just so... cute, and in her little mage outfit she performed in, pouting her lip and giving Tenko an unamused stare, it was too much! Tenko often had to find an excuse to leave the room so she could scream and Neo-Aikido the shit out of a pillow or something, just to release her cuteness aggression. But that was normal, right? All girls totally had to chop blocks of wood in half to express themselves after seeing a really cute girl. Typical, normal, usual stuff!

Tenko was going to need some screaming and kicking time after this. Himiko usually said she was too tired to hang out after her shows, what with draining her MP and all, but Tenko offered to have a calm, relaxing, MP recharging movie night, and Himiko had begrudgingly agreed. Though Tenko didn't know how much attention she could even pay to whatever movie they watched since Himiko was... well... blinding, dazzling Himiko!

However, on this magical Tuesday evening, when Tenko was supposed to meet her friend after her show, she was blinded by something else. Flashbulbs.

Himiko was quite famous; she toured the world to perform, and teenagers everywhere were infatuated with her. And with all her fame came the tabloids, the groupies, and the paparazzi. Photographers, reporters with microphones, and rabid fans often laid in wait for Himiko as she left the theater after a show, swarming all exits and entrances. Tenko had only jokingly suggested she have a helicopter waiting for her on the roof, but now it was starting to seem like a good idea.

BLINDED...

Tenko was just arriving as Himiko unknowingly opened the back door of the theater all alone and walked into their trap, barraged by the blinding flashbulbs. She put her hands up in defense, squinting her eyes and stumbling forward, nearly falling down the trio of stairs and right into the clutches of some crazed fan. He reached out for her with his grubby little hands, and it made the hairs on the back of Tenko's neck stand up. How dare he grab at her coat like that, tugging her sleeve and begging for an autograph like a dog drooling beneath a dinner table. Disgusting!

With tunnel vision, Tenko lept into action. "Hey!" There was no time for a clever comeback. There was no need. Tenko's hand sliced the air and delivered a swift blow to the fan's wrist, severing his attachment to Himiko's coat. Even with disgust boiling inside her, Tenko managed to keep herself in control, using enough force to get him off without injuring him, and placing herself between the crowd and Himiko. That was the Neo-Aikido way after all: channeling your emotions into precise weaponry! The sad excuse for a human staggered back in shock that some random teen girl had stood up to him like that. Serves him right for underestimating a girl! But of course, he had an inferiority complex, as most men did. Suddenly feeling the need to prove his manhood, he took a wild swing at Tenko's face.

His swing had power, but lacked finesse, and Tenko deflected it easily. She used his own momentum against him and sent him stumbling to the side. Hah, this fool was barely worth her time! She was here to see Himiko, after all. Even though this stupid little man ignited a flame of rage inside her, it didn't compare to the soft spot she had for Himiko.

"Himiko! Are you alright?" Tenko whirled around to ask, eyebrows furrowed.

Himiko had pulled her hat down over her eyes, hiding best she could from the crowd. But she lifted her chin and peeked up at Tenko briefly. "Yeah... I'm..." Tenko could barely hear her over the clamoring of the crowd, leaning closer. When she leaned, however, Himiko screamed in her ear. "Wahhh!" Her little eyes widened as they focused on something over Tenko's shoulder, and she pointed a trembling finger. Tenko's gaze was torn away from Himiko's face as her head was jerked backwards, not of her own volition.

Oh, that little scumbag. This crude, rude little man dared to pull the hair of the girl who invented Neo-Aikido? What a low blow, using her girly physical characteristics like long hair against her in battle! He was going down. Using the momentum she gained from the man yanking her hair backwards, Tenko jabbed her elbow right into his gut and he exhaled the foulest smelling breath Tenko had ever smelled. He then crumpled to the ground like the pathetic creature he was.

"Let's get out of here!" Tenko decided that was enough violence in front of Himiko for one night. She offered her arm to Himiko, who wordlessly accepted it, and they absconded off into the night.

"You shouldn't have done that..." Himiko grumbled once they were safely back on the Hope's Peak campus, still keeping her hat low over her face. They had hooked arms as they fled, Tenko practically dragging Himiko along. But now that they had escaped, Tenko was still reluctant to give it up. Because... she was being protective is all! In case anyone followed them is all!

BLINDED...

"I couldn't just let you get mauled by those crazy fans!" Tenko asserted, surprised.

"But now they got pictures of us... You're in the tabloids with me and they're saying weird stuff." Himiko pulled out her phone and showed Tenko the headline.
Himiko's Bodyguard: Karate Girl to the Rescue, it read.

"Karate? Of course they would generalize all martial arts into karate! Neo-Aikido is completely different!" Tenko wrinkled her nose and kept reading the story.

There was indeed a blurry picture of her leaping into action to defend Himiko... It was kind of a cute picture! Tenko's Neo-Aikido form was perfect here, and she looked brave in her stance. And Himiko looked justifiably horrified as the violence unfolded. Tenko smiled at it for a moment before continuing to read.

The article, unfortunately, was not so cute. It was full of baseless accusations and false statements, general tabloid garbage spreading rumors about everything from the actual magicality of Himiko's show to suggesting the karate girl intervention was a planned stunt for media attention.
As if Himiko and Tenko would want this kind of stuff written about them! And the comments section was even worse! Oh gosh... some people even suspected Himiko and her mysterious martial arts savior were in a relationship.
Tenko's cheeks heated up and she handed the phone back to Himiko.

"I'm sorry, Himiko, I didn't mean to cause a scene." She sighed. She hadn't realized the consequences for doing anything in public with a celebrity. Even waving hello was enough to get these rabid creatures going.

Himiko looked down at her phone, then back up at Tenko. "Hmph... it's fine. That guy was a creep. So... The article wasn't totally wrong. You did kind of save me, I guess." She puffed up her cheeks, trying to play off that she had said something genuine. Genuine and sweet. She didn't actually say thank you, but Tenko interpreted it that way nonetheless.

And right about now, Tenko could use a good pillow to scream into.

Tenko held her breath, feeling her cheeks heat up and turn bright red. She didn't dare look down at Himiko now.
She didn't trust herself to! She was caught in a trap with her arm still locked with Himiko's as they walked, and it was her own fault for not letting go earlier! She should... probably say something, right? That would be a great way to act normal! "Haha... You're welcome." Tenko managed, staring straight ahead and forcing herself to take measured breaths.

"Um, Tenko..." Himiko spoke up, sounding slightly confused.

"Huh?" Tenko swallowed, hoping Himiko wasn't going to point out the color of her cheeks.

"We just passed your dorm room." Himiko stopped in her tracks, and this time she did the leading, steering Tenko in a circle with her arm.

"Oh!" Tenko dared a glance down at Himiko finally.
Himiko's expression was one of subtle amusement, her eyes lidded and the corner of her mouth just barely showing a smile. She was used to Tenko's antics after all, and even though most things in life annoyed or bored her, somehow Tenko was an exception.

BLINDED...

Tenko felt honored to be the exception. She laughed at her own spaciness now that Himiko had smirked at her, the tension easing. She forgot that she could just be herself around Himiko, and Himiko didn't question it. She could only hope Himiko felt the same way and felt comfortable to be her true self around Tenko.

Taking out her key, Tenko let them into her dorm room, a modest space with plain furniture, a few pictures of friends and family pinned to a corkboard, and a TV that was collecting dust since Tenko never really watched anything when she was alone. She had grown up in a monastery after all, so she was used to keeping things simple and neat. Those were the tenets of Neo-Aikido too: having a clean room and a made bed! Her master would be proud.

Himiko slipped her arm out of Tenko's and plopped down on the couch, sighing. Tenko had almost forgotten how low on mana Himiko must be after her show! "Himiko, would you like something to eat or drink? Are electrolytes as good for restoring MP as they are for hydration after a workout?"

"I'm not an electric or water type mage..." Himiko raised an eyebrow, a little tired and definitely confused. Tenko smiled fondly and offered her a sports drink and some popcorn, which Himiko gratefully accepted. She was so cute, delicately picking up one fluffy, white kernel at a time to eat, whereas Tenko typically grabbed a handful.

Tenko sat down next to Himiko with the bowl of popcorn in between them, overanalyzing the space. Was she sitting too close? Or should she have picked up the popcorn so she could sit closer? She was going insane, clearly.
Himiko didn't seem to care! She was just happy to be restoring her mana with snacks.

"What movie would you like to watch, Himiko?" Tenko picked up the remote to take her mind off such things, scrolling through various streaming services.

"Hmm..." Himiko's eyes darted around the screen for a moment, sizing up the choices. Tenko wanted to let her choose, but also she secretly hoped Himiko would pick something lighthearted and not very scary...
Perhaps something animated, that Tenko had seen a million times, so she wouldn't feel like she was missing things if somehow she got distracted looking at Himiko instead of the screen. But suddenly, Himiko glanced back at Tenko and sat up. "Tenko, your hair!"

"What?" Tenko patted the top of her head, hoping she didn't look totally ridiculous right now and was walking around without knowing.

Himiko reached out and took one of Tenko's twintails in her hand, forcing Tenko to hold her breath. She hadn't even noticed the white ribbon that held her complicated hairstyle in place was missing, and the loops were starting to unravel.
"That man... when he pulled your hair, he must have stolen your ribbon. I ought to put a curse on him. You didn't happen to pull out a strand of his hair, did you?"
She furrowed her brow darkly.

"Oh, no I didn't... It's okay, Himiko. I'm sure I have another ribbon around here somewhere. Don't tucker yourself out with any more magic!" Tenko was kind of touched that Himiko would do such a thing for her... But she was supposed to be the heroic one saving Himiko! Tenko shifted, about to get off the couch and go look around for another ribbon.

“Wait!” Himiko put a hand on her shoulder, stopping her from getting up. “I still have enough MP for one more spell.” She smiled, then folded her hands together, gathering strength. Tenko swiveled to face her, sitting criss-cross applesauce on the couch and watching with anticipation. Himiko’s fingers unclasped and twirled around each other like a dance. Then, she reached behind Tenko’s ear, her fingers gently brushing her hairline. From thin air, Himiko pulled out a multicolored scarf. Tenko gasped, mesmerized. But Himiko was not done yet! The scarf was impossibly long. It just kept coming and coming, yards of fabric somehow emerging from a wormhole behind Tenko’s ear. She giggled with delight as the rainbow scarf piled up in a heap in her lap. Finally, the end fluttered down into Tenko’s open hands and she held onto it tenderly.

“Himiko, that was amazing! How did you… Oh, nevermind! I forgot to never ask a mage her secrets!” She laughed, scooping all the fabric up in her arms.

“Perhaps one day I can teach you the basic principles of magic, if you prove worthy.” Himiko had a glint in her eye that made Tenko weak in the knees. She let out a nervous laugh.

As lovely as the magic spell had been, Tenko wasn’t quite sure what to do with the enormous scarf Himiko had just summoned. She held up a portion of it equal in length to her own hair, but there was still much, much more to go. “Hmm… I’m going to be like Rapunzel if I try to put this in my hair. I’m worried I’ll trip over it!”

Himiko stroked her chin for a moment, thinking, and then lifted one finger in the air. “I’ve got it!” She propped herself up on her knees, taking the loose strands of Tenko’s hair in her hands, sizing it up before carefully folding the scarf into sections as long as Tenko’s hair.

BLINDED...

Tenko turned to face away from Himiko, giving her easy access to her hair. She felt like a little girl at a sleepover all of the sudden. She never really had any of those as a kid! Not a lot of girls her age at the monastery… And the girls at her school thought she was a bit crazy!

Himiko’s hands were gentle as she braided, holding the strands tight enough to keep the braid taught and crisp, but not tugging on Tenko’s scalp. With the scarf integrated with her hair, it was like she had rainbow highlights. Himiko was a genius for that! Himiko… was braiding her hair.
This was… really going to test Tenko’s mental strength.
But she was strong! She could do it!

Letting her eyes fall closed, Tenko tried to calm herself, just enjoying the comforting sensation of Himiko doing her hair, her knuckles gently brushing Tenko’s back as she twisted the strands. She tried not to think about how Himiko’s cute little brow was probably furrowing in concentration right now. She tried not to think of Himiko’s pursed lips. She tried not to think of the warm smile on Himiko’s face as she had joyfully used her magic to do something sweet for Tenko…
Well… This wasn’t working!

Just as Himiko tied the end of the scarf around Tenko’s hair and finished off the braid, Tenko couldn’t stand it any more. She whirled back around to face Himiko, quite red in the face. “Thank you, Himiko! It looks lovely!” She shouted, much too loud for the room. Himiko blinked, somewhat startled after the ends of Tenko’s hair were pulled from her grasp.
“I just have something I have to say to you, right now!”

BLINDED...

Himiko slipped off her boots and pulled her knees up, facing Tenko. “Okay…” She looked a little nervous. Had Tenko freaked her out? Oh no… Well, Tenko was freaking out also, and she’d freak out even more if she didn’t just… say it!

“I…” Tenko started, then swallowed. She probably should have thought about how to say this. But she had been too busy telling herself it wasn’t true, that this was nothing out of the ordinary. And plus, she wasn’t really the type to carefully plan out her words and actions. So here goes!
“I like you, Himiko!”

Himiko sat there in stunned silence for a moment.
Tenko sat there in stunned silence for a moment too.
She had… actually said it out loud, the thing she hadn’t even admitted to herself until the words left her lips. But the weight had not fully lifted. She needed Himiko to say something. Anything!

Himiko grabbed the edges of her hat and pulled it down around her ears, leaning against the couch. Her face had turned bright red, where Tenko could see it through the hat and her hair. “I know…” Himiko smiled, looking up at Tenko with puppy dog eyes. “I just didn’t think you were ever gonna say it.”

“You… knew?” Tenko laughed nervously, not sure what in the world that meant. No amount of Neo-Aikido breathing exercises could steady her breath right now.

“Yeah.” Himiko giggled too, letting go of her hat and running her fingers through her bangs. “I kept putting off telling you that I like you too.”

Tenko almost blacked out when Himiko said that, in her typical, monotone voice, as if it was nothing, as if she was telling Tenko that she liked the popcorn. But this wasn’t about the popcorn. This was about mutual romantic feelings, romantic feelings bubbling up in Tenko’s chest so strong she could barely stand it. “Haha… one moment…” Tenko grabbed the couch cushion, tore it from its velcro attachment strip, and shoved it into her face.

She let out the long winded scream she had been holding in all night. It may have sounded aggressive to the average person, but for Tenko, it was a muffled scream of compressed joy, nervousness, and excitement.

After all the air had left her lungs, Tenko kept the cushion over her face, regaining her breath and feeling too embarrassed to look up. But a hand gently pulled the cushion away, revealing Himiko kneeling on the other side, eyebrows raised. “Are you okay?” She asked, tilting her head to the side.

“Yeah, I am now.” Tenko breathed, her face all red from the exertion of the scream.

“Okay… Good.” Himiko smiled, and planted a soft kiss on Tenko’s lips. Tenko expected a kiss from the Ultimate Mage to feel like magic, but it was more magical than she ever could’ve dreamed of, as if her whole body had been transformed into blinding, mystical sparkles and bubbles and rainbows. She was going to need to scream into that cushion again really soon.

JUMP!
MACHA TEA
Hi Pumpkin!
Tenkooo!
It's cold!
It's your favorite though.
TSHIK!
Thank youuu!

What are we doing this weekend?
DiD-
DiD we-
Plan Something?
No, but like-
We always do stuff on week ends.
Come on. My bus is arriving.
I guess we do huh?

I'll call you after Aikido okay?
GRAB
See you this weekend.

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

Written by: Cam

Love is hard, or at least it can be for us ordinary folks.

First, you have to find a nice person to catch your eye and then wait and see if your heart does a flutter, or see if the butterflies in your stomach take flight. If that does happen, you then must be lucky enough for the other person to react the same way.

Then you have to get to know this person, make sure they're kind and respectful and a good match for you, and if you're a good match for them in return. Do you mesh well? Do you have the same beliefs and ideas, and do you both want the same things out of the relationship and out of life?

Unfortunately, it does not always end in the perfect love connection, complete with a long, happy marriage and dying together as the cruise ship you're on slowly sinks into the murky waters below.

Things would be so much easier if your perfect match were found for you.

Fortunately, in the world that Chabashira Tenko lives in, the name of your soulmate is displayed on your wrist from the moment of your birth, even if the other party isn't born yet! It's not necessarily a perfect system, seeing as it's only the first name, and there are thousands of different people that share the same name, but it helps to give a pretty good idea.

When Chabashira is bored in class, like today, she often traces the beautiful black letters on her wrist, spelling out the name "Himiko."

"Chabashira-san!"

And she is often scolded by the teacher for it.

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

The olive-haired girl sighs, rolling her sleeve back down and picking her pencil back up as if to take notes.
It's such a lovely day out! It's a day that should be spent going for a run or sunbathing, or doing anything else that isn't the Pythagorean Theorem.

Suddenly, there is a knock on the classroom door.
The teacher rolls her eyes, muttering something under her breath as she opens the door.
Standing on the other side stands the most beautiful girl Chabashira's ever seen in her life. She's petite with an adorable figure, the Hope's Peak Academy uniform hanging off of her perfectly. She has a bob of ruby red hair and sparkling hazel eyes that set Chabashira's heart on fire. She's so cute!!!

The teacher looks the short girl up and down with a scrutinizing frown, making a displeased noise in the back of her throat. "You're late."
"I overslept. My bed was very cozy this morning."
The new girl's voice reminds Chabashira of (oddly enough) balloons and jellybeans.

The teacher grabs her wrist and drags her into the center of the room. "Well, since you've finally arrived, you should introduce yourself to your new classmates."

The new girl turns her gaze on the students in the class for the first time through half-lidded eyes.
"Nyeh, I'm Yumeno. I guess I'm new in class. Take care of me."
Instead of going for a proper bow, she merely bobs her head before returning a blank gaze to the teacher.

"There's an empty spot next to Chabashira. You may take a seat there."

The new girl, Yumeno, drags her feet down the aisle and practically falls into the seat next to her. The teacher gives her one last distasteful look before resuming her lecture.

The olive-haired girl watches the other out of the corner of her eye, trying to soak up every little detail about her.
It's only been about two minutes, and she already wants to know everything; what she does with her spare time, what are her biggest goals and aspirations…
Who's name is on her wrist…

"Stop staring at me." Yumeno hisses suddenly, making the other jump.
"Sorry!" She whispers, "I didn't mean to creep you out."
Yumeno doesn't answer, resting her chin in the palm of her hand.
"I'm Chabashira," She continues, "Welcome to our class."
Yumeno glances at her. "Thanks."
"…If you'd like, I can show you around after?"
"…Sure, that'd be great."
Chabashira smiles. "It's a date, then."
One-on-one time with the new, beautiful girl. How exciting.

"…And this is the cafeteria," Chabashira concludes, coming to a stop in front of the double doors. Yumeno nods, itching her wrist. "Wow…This school is bigger than I thought it was. Anyways, I didn't bring a lunch. Does the cafeteria sell food here?"
The olive-haired girl nods happily. "Yeah! I mean, the prices are a little high, but the food is of even higher quality, so in a way, it's worth it. You can sit at my table as well if you want."

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

Yumeno yawns. “That’d be great, thanks… Wait, how many people are there?”
“Don’t worry, not too many. You’ll love them, I promise!” Chabashira insists, grabbing the shorter girl’s hand and pulling her through the doors.
The room is abuzz with loud chatter, students walking to and from tables with trays of food in hand. Chabashira looks back at her, giving her a wide smile as they move up to the canteen.
They quickly purchase their lunches before the taller girl eagerly brings her newest companion back to her table.

“What are your friends like, Chabashira?” Yumeno murmurs.
“Oh, they’re great people! Two of them are actual real-life soulmates!”
Yumeno’s eyebrows raise. “Really? Are you sure? The odds of finding your real-life soulmate are slim. Maybe a mistake was made?”

“Trust me, even if these two didn’t have the names on their wrists, they would still be soulmates. It’s the way they look at each other and how they interact with each other.
It’s looking at each other and just knowing before evening seeing each other's wrists. It’s…It’s my dream to find that, Yumeno-san.”

“Sounds nice…Do you think you’ll ever find that, Chabashira?”
Chabashira pauses slightly, looking down at the cherry-haired girl with a soft smile.
“Lord, I hope so.”

The two keep going until they land in front of a table, Chabashira pulling out a chair for her new friend to sit on before sitting herself.

“This is Yumeno-san,” She announces proudly, “She’s new! Yumeno-san, these are Akamatsu, Harukawa, and the soulmates I told you about, Sonia and Nanami.”
Yumeno’s eyes widen as she sits down across from those two. “Wow…How does it feel to live my dream?”

The blonde flushes, squeezing her partner’s hand. Both are wearing short sleeves, making it impossible to hide the matching names, which makes Yumeno’s heart flutter with jealousy. She wants to find that with someone as well.

“We just got lucky,” The other girl yawns, “You will soon someday.”

Akamatsu turns her eager eyes on Yumeno, ready to begin grilling her about herself and her life before coming here. Yumeno just sits back, resigning to just answer and get it over with.

Chabashira once again sits, tracing the six-letter name on her wrist, sitting cross-legged on her bed in the middle of her room.
Her mouth twists into a slight frown looking down at it. It’s a shame that it doesn’t say ‘Yumeno’...But then again, she doesn’t actually know Yumeno’s given name now, does she? She should make a point to find out at some point.

She’s known Yumeno for about two months now? It doesn’t matter how much time they’ve really been going out together, but man, has it sure been nice.

In fact, if she didn’t know any better, she’d say she’s starting to get an itty bitty crush on Yumeno. But, of course, who could blame her? What’s not to love about Yumeno?!

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

With her jellybean voice and her cranberry-coloured hair, dazzling sense of style and parlour tricks that may or may not be real magic, Yumeno-san is the ideal girl. The ideal everything! Yumeno is-
Okay, maybe it's more than just a small crush.

Chabashira's phone lights up with a notification from said girl, and her heart clenches. She wants to hang out later, and the athletic girl is more than happy to oblige.

The olive-haired girl is quick to make a grab for her phone and type out an eager reply. A part of her inside wonders if she is coming on too strong, despite her only intention right now being to form a close friendship with the intriguing young mage. It's not like Chabashira wasn't mocked in the past for how strong she can come on and, as a result, scare potential friends or partners away in the process.

Sometimes she's been too eager during the friendship, and that would just push the other person away. The athletic girl is no stranger to heartbreak.
To play it safe, she reads over her reply a good three times to make sure that it was just right before sending it.
When Yumeno responds with a flourish of adorable emojis, well, now, she can't help the little squeal of excitement that comes out. No one is around to hear it anyway.

Tenko grabs her pillow and hugs it to her chest, zoning out as she finds herself lost in a whirlwind of fantasies about her newest friend.

That's not weird, right? Especially if they're a crush as well? No, surely it's not odd; it's okay. It's just normal teenage girl behaviour.

However, if Yumeno could see inside her head, she'd most likely be disgusted. But minds are private for a reason.

The two of them decided to see a movie and then go out for milkshakes afterwards.
It's a good plan; it's a fun night (that may or may not seem a lot like a date), and Chabashira gets to spend a lot of one-on-one time with Yumeno.

Chabashira must've spent far too much time obsessing over what she was going to wear (After all, despite all of the fantasies, it's not a date, so she doesn't necessarily have to look perfect but still wants to look nice because they're going out and she wants the possibility of a date in the future and-). Still, in the end, she thinks she chose well. She's pulled her long brunette hair back in two tight French braids to compliment the maroon sweater dress and black tights she picked out with Mary Janes.

She's not used to dressing this feminine, but damn she looks good. She wonders what Yumeno is going to be wearing. In a completely normal way, of course, not in a perverted way. Of course.
But she'll look beautiful in anything. After all, this is Yumeno we're talking about here!

Chabashira lingers awkwardly in front of the movie theatre, checking the leather watch on her wrist every three-to-five seconds. The agreed-upon time for the meet-up is still in about ten minutes which is another ten minutes before the movie. The athletic girl, being a nervous, pinning wreck, showed up early-she knew this-so she herself should at least understand why she's worried Yumeno isn't here yet.

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

She's early!
She's going to lose her mind.

"Oh…So you're early too."
Those five words get the brunette's heart racing as she whirls around to take her in.

Oh God, Yumeno is breathtaking. Despite the fact that she's wearing a chunky white-knit sweater over khakis, the taller girl still can't help but-
"Yeah, I was running ahead, so I just decided to come," Chabashira chuckles awkwardly, fidgeting with one of her braids, "Anyways, I'm glad you're here now."

Yumeno hums.

"So, how are you liking the school so far?"

"It's nice. Everyone is really nice," The mage smiles slightly, "I also like that the friends I've made at this school so far have an actual appreciation for real magic," A scowl, "The people at my old school weren't as nice about it. But no matter; I know it's real, and all of these new people know it's real. But if my soulmate never believed in my abilities… Despite all of my self-confidence, it would probably shatter my heart."

Before she knows it, Tenko is grabbing the shorter girl's hands to express her passion further. "Well, of course, they'll know, Yumeno-san! How could anyone deny that truth or deny you?! If your soulmate's that much of an idiot, I'll beat the crap out of them!"

The cranberry-haired girl laughs softly. "Thanks, Chabashira, that means a lot."
"Yeah, so if-...What's your soulmate's name, by the way?"

Yumeno moves to roll up her sleeve. "Oh, it's-"
Before she can finish her sentence, they're interrupted by a random passerby stumbling on a crack in the pavement, tumbling forward and hitting Yumeno, knocking them both to the ground.

"GAH!"
The male who smacked against her yelps, immediately scrambling to his feet and extending a hand to her. "I'm so sorry, miss. Are you okay?!"

Talk about a meet-cute. Tenko scowls at the thought.

Yumeno accepts the hand with a shy smile, a slight flush of pink on her cheeks. "Nyeh, I'm okay, thank you. Are you?"

His eyes sparkle as he takes her in. "Yeah, I'm good, thanks. I'm really sorry about my clumsiness; it seems to be a huge problem for anyone that comes into my proximity."

"It's really no big deal," Yumeno's eyes are shining as she stares up at the very tall boy, "Really, I should've been-"

"Excuse me," Chabashira interrupts smoothly (it may be kind of rude, but when jealousy rears its ugly head…), "But my girl here and I are about to be late for a movie. See you."

She grabs Yumeno's arm and starts tugging her in the direction of the theatre, resulting in a blubbering boy and a confused little mage.

Yumeno found it kind of odd that Chabashira suddenly got protective (Was that the right word? Perhaps jealous?) of her when she bumped into that kind stranger. And the way she phrased it, "my girl,"...almost as if they were together.

She smiles at the interesting thought. But it would probably never be, anyway. The mage had silently promised herself to her soulmate long ago.

"What flavour of milkshake would you like, Yumeno-san? I can go order for both of us!" Chabashira asks cheerfully, eyes glued to the menu of the icecream parlour, snapping the shorter girl out of her thoughts.
"Huh? Oh…strawberry?"
The olive-haired girl beams. "Wait right here!"

Yumeno can't help but smile again, watching her friend happily bounce up to the front counter to place their order. Her gaze then falls to her arm, still buried underneath her very thick sweater. She rolls up her sleeve, tracing her fingers over the five-letter name.
A most-beautiful name.

Himiko drops her sleeve just in time as Chabashira returns to her earlier than expected, holding one of two purple and red cups out to her. A couple of napkins are in her hand as well in case one of them has a little spill.
"What do you say we walk around town with these while it's still a little light out?"
Yumeno readily agrees.

Chabashira is happily babbling about an anime she's recently started watching that's really caught her interest. It's not one Yumeno's seen before, but from just the way that her friend is talking about it is enough to convince her to give it a shot. In fact, she's so immersed in Chabashira's words that she's stopped paying attention to where she's stepping, not noticing a bit of concrete jutting out of the ground more than normal.

She trips, milkshake going flying.
"Yumeno-san!"

Yumeno is able to save herself from hitting her head by taking the majority of the impact with her arms, but as a result, gets them all scratched up.

"Are you okay? Yumeno-san? Let me help you up!"
"Fine…"
How embarrassing, stumbling and falling twice in one day within hours.
The cranberry-haired girl accepts Chabashira's hand easily, allowing herself to be hauled to her feet.
"You're bleeding! Hold on; I'll clean you up."

The athlete sets her drink off to the side, gathering the napkins and rolling up Yumeno's sleeve. Yumeno watches carefully as she wipes away the blood with a perfectly-composed face, revealing the name underneath. Chabashira takes one look at it and freezes, staring unblinkingly at the shimmering letters reading '*Tenko.*'

Yumeno senses the change immediately, shooting her a worried look. "Chabashira? What's wrong?"

Chabashira takes a moment to make sure her voice won't shake too much before answering her.

"I-I…No…S-Say, Yumeno-san, what's your given name?"
"Hmm? *Himiko*. Why, what's yours?"
Well, that confirms it.

The olive-haired girl lets go of Yumeno's arm in favour of rolling up her own sleeve and showing her wrist to her.
"My given name is *Tenko*."

(AM I) BOUND TO YOU

Yumeno inhales sharply. The name on her wrist. And her own name is clear as day on Chabashira's wrist.
That only means one thing.
"You're most likely my soulmate."
"And you're most likely mine."

What a dream come true! Neither of them imagined that it would be this easy to find their soulmate; even if the reason for finding out was somewhat misfortune.

After silently gawking at each other for a moment, Chabashira remembers herself and finishes cleaning up her soulmate's arm. Yumeno briefly turns her head away, silently mourning the loss of her milkshake.
"Would you like to share my milkshake? It's peanut butter flavour. O-Or we can go back, and I'll get you a fresh one! Yeah! Or-"
It's clear that the shock of finding her soulmate in Yumeno (also her crush) has really shaken Chabashira up. Yumeno reaches out and takes her free hand, startling Chabashira.

"Hey, I know it's daunting and strange and new. But we don't need to worry about what this means right away if we don't want to. We'll have all of the time in the world for that. For now, let's just have a good rest of the evening and enjoy each other's company, okay?"

Chabashira looks into her soulmate's eyes and then down at her smile and knows that things are okay.
There's no rush. They can be happy.

They will be okay.

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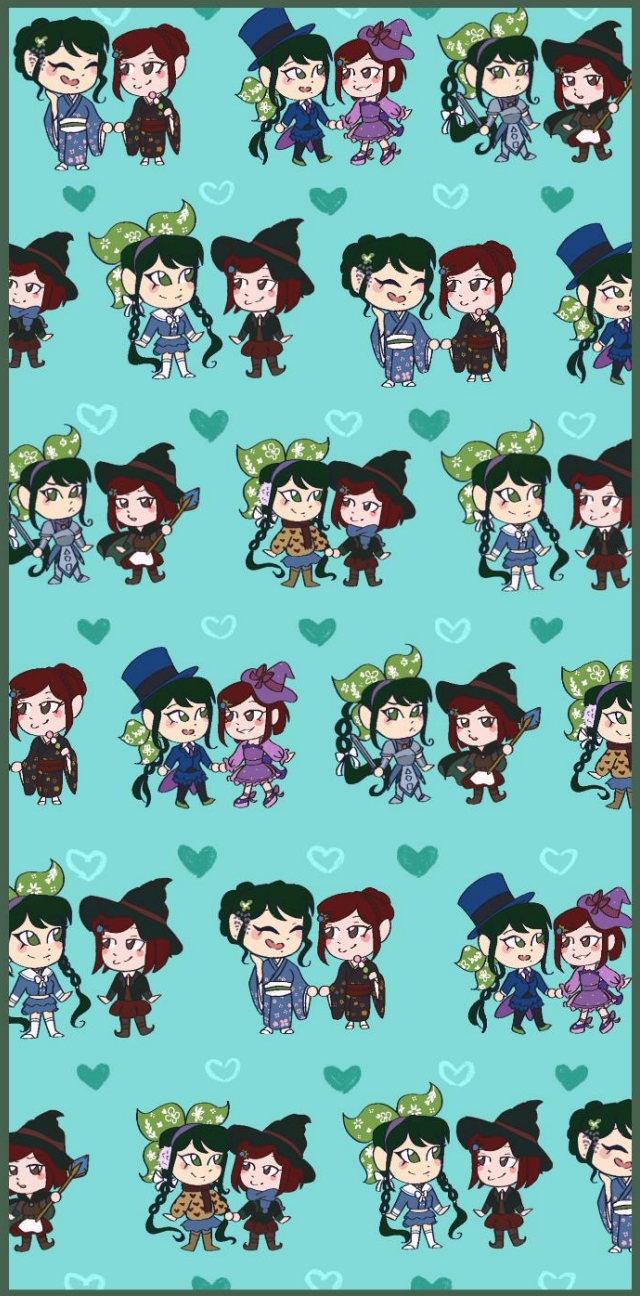

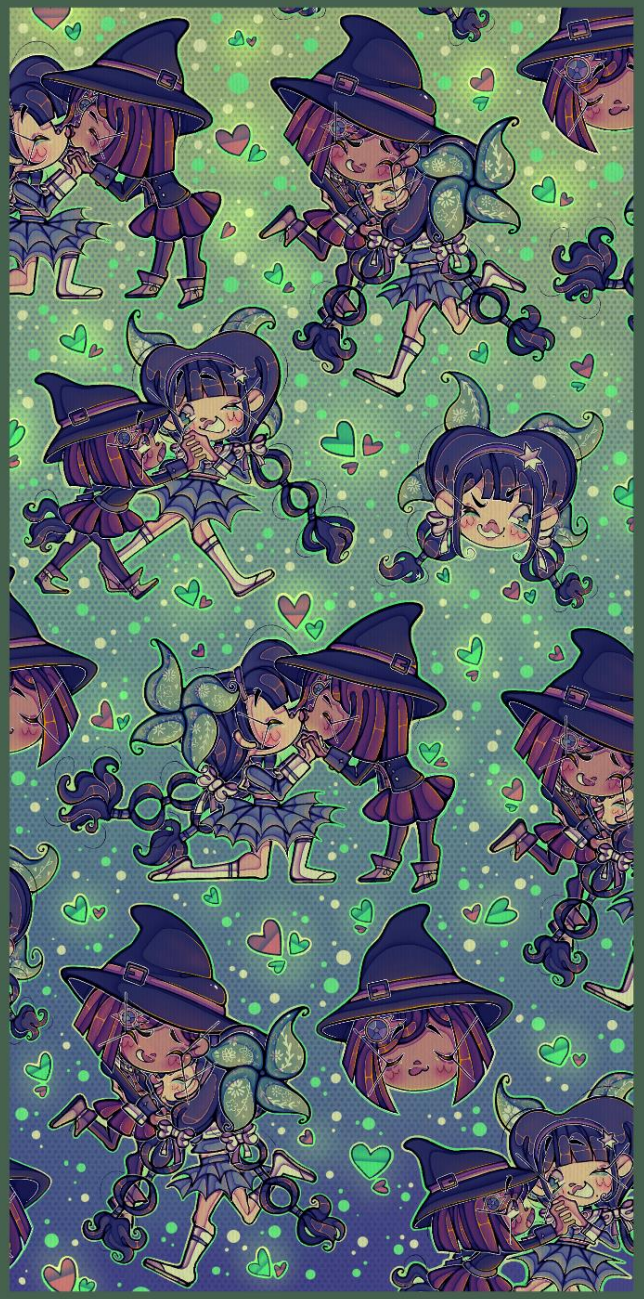

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